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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ROME 000427

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TAGS: [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#) [BM](#) [GG](#) [IR](#) [IT](#) [KN](#) [PK](#)

XA, XF, YM

SUBJECT: U/S BURNS' PARTICIPATION IN G8 POLITICAL DIRECTORS  
MEETING, TAORMINA, APRIL 6-7

REF: A. ROME 144

[1](#)B. ROME 409

Classified By: Acting Political Minister-Counselor J. Liam Wasley for r  
easons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (U) This message has been cleared by Under Secretary  
Burns.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Summary: Under Secretary of State for Political  
Affairs Bill Burns participated in the second Political  
Directors meeting of the Italian G8 Presidency in Taormina,  
Sicily, April 6-7. The Political Directors discussed a  
skeleton draft of the Chairman's Statement for the June 26 G8  
Foreign Ministers meeting in Trieste, and then had a free  
flowing exchange of ideas on a wide variety of regional and  
functional policy issues. Italy will now incorporate input  
from the G8 members and circulate a full draft of the  
Chairman's Statement as well as the political portion of the  
Summit Leaders' Statement for comments by mid-May. These  
documents will then be discussed at the third Political  
Directors meeting in Rome, June 8-9, with the possibility of  
a fourth meeting on the eve of the Foreign Ministerial if  
necessary. Topical summaries of key issues are in paragraphs  
2 to 14. End Summary.

Yemen and Piracy off the Horn of Africa  
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[1](#)3. (SBU) In addition to going over the draft Chairman's  
Statement, discussion at the Political Directors' dinner the  
evening of April 6 followed up on an Italian proposal to  
provide more political support for Yemen, which grew out of  
the previous meeting's discussion of piracy (see Ref A), and  
Japanese Political Director Sasae's recommendation that the  
Italian proposal be linked more systematically to combating  
piracy off the Horn of Africa. The Japanese proposal is  
based on the assumption that successfully combating piracy  
off the Horn of Africa over the long term requires bringing

peace to Somalia, preventing Yemen from becoming a failed state, and strengthening the anti-piracy capacities of other regional states such as Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, and Oman. The Japanese propose coordinated G8 assistance to build such capacities, to support the peace process in Somalia, and to foster development (poverty reduction, governance, security) in Somalia, Yemen and Djibouti. The Japanese suggested G8 ambassadors and experts meet in Yemen and Nairobi to develop these ideas further prior to the G8 Foreign Ministers meeting June 26. The G8 could then use the ambassadorial/expert proposals to shape their assistance programs going forward, and progress could be reviewed during the Canadian G8 Presidency in 2010. All of the other G8 delegations supported these Japanese proposals.

#### Nonproliferation

¶4. (SBU) The session on nonproliferation, counterterrorism, and peacekeeping consisted largely of reports from the Italians on previous meetings in other summit channels. On nonproliferation, Italy announced its intention to include nonproliferation in the Summit Leaders' Statement, rather than issue a stand-alone statement as has been done in the past. Italy plans to circulate draft nonproliferation language for comments the week of April 13-17. Key points will include: the importance of the 2010 NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) review process, the universalization of the IAEA additional protocol and the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty), progress in the FMCT

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#### Counterterrorism/Transnational Organized Crime

¶5. (SBU) Italy will continue the practice of issuing a stand-alone statement on counterterrorism at the Summit. They highlighted the growing linkages between terrorism and organized crime, noting that they will be hosting a conference on this subject in Rome, April 23-24. Italy also seeks to strengthen the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). The main counterterrorism (CT) issues they intend to highlight are radicalization, recruitment, terrorism finance and the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), misuse of charities and the Internet, and the need to find a balance between fighting terrorism and respecting human rights and the rule of law. On the operational level, Italy supports expanding the G8 Counterterrorism Action Group (CTAG) to include additional key countries.

¶6. (SBU) Other G8 member states were largely supportive of the Italian proposals. Russia highlighted the importance of capacity building in G8 partner countries and the importance of not linking terrorism to any particular religion. Japan supported the Italian proposals, including CTAG expansion and capacity building. The UK supported the Italian approach as well, but suggested additional CT language for the stand-alone statement, including more effective implementation of existing UN measures (including UNSCR 1267), support for wider UN measures (on human rights, conflicts, failed states, etc.) as a framework for CT efforts, language on the value of charities to balance language on their abuse, and a reference to working to prevent terrorist use of CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) weapons. Italy said the draft CT language had not been intended to be exhaustive, and the UK proposals could be included. It also agreed that language on terrorism should not be linked to religion and supported CTAG expansion.

#### Peacekeeping/Peacebuilding

¶7. (SBU) Italy highlighted its intent for the G8 to strengthen cooperation with the UN and African Union (AU) in

order to build capacity to respond effectively to the growing number of requests for peacekeeping operations. This will include G8 efforts to make operational the African Standby Force, and a focus on training and close coordination among all key actors. Italy will seek to maintain momentum in this area by hosting another coordination event later in the year (after the Summit).

DPRK

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18. (C) Discussion of DPRK focused on the missile launch and Japan's proposal that Foreign Ministers issue a statement condemning the event. U/S Burns supported the Japanese proposal, assuming that the language was not watered down and complemented ongoing efforts in New York. Russia claimed

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there was still uncertainty about what the DPRK was trying to do on April 5 (test a ballistic missile or launch a satellite), and that the failure of the launch showed that the DPRK was not making much progress with its rocket technology. Russia argued there was disagreement on whether the launch violated existing UNSCRs, how the international community should respond, and what the DPRK was likely to do next. In the Russian view, consultations in New York showed promise, and action in the UNSC was preferable to any G8 statement. G8 messaging to the DPRK should focus on urging it to restore the confidence of the international community and to resume Six Party Talks. Russia therefore could not accept the use of the word "condemn," proposing instead "regret," and also cautioned it could not support any statement that referred to the event as a violation of UNSCRs.

19. (C) All other delegations favored a stronger G8 response to the DPRK rocket launch. Japan said that satellite launch and missile technology could not be separated or distinguished, and the launch should thus be condemned. Both the UNSC and the G8 should act, the latter via a ministerial statement along the lines of Japan's proposed text. Dialogue with the DPRK was important, but first it must be reminded of the consequences of its actions. The U.K. supported a G8 statement if it were robust and did nothing to weaken UN efforts. U.K. Political Director Mark Lyall Grant cautioned that if the G8 could not reach consensus on some form of statement, it fundamentally called into question the value of G8 discussions of regional affairs. Germany agreed missile and satellite technology could not be separated, and described the launch as a clear violation of UNSCRs. Germany had already condemned the launch, and advised other Political Directors the EU was considering condemnation. The G8 should issue a statement, and Germany supported the Japanese text. France also supported the Japanese text and agreed a message must be sent to the DPRK. Canada did not want to undermine any UN action, and suggested that a G8 statement could focus on the impact of the launch on regional stability rather than violations of UNSCRs. Italy said the G8 should do its part to make the DPRK feel the consequences of its actions via a statement.

110. (C) Discussion of the Japanese draft statement continued over lunch, with Canada pushing for consensus via alternative language. Russia's attempts to water down the statement ultimately prevented consensus.

Burma

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111. (SBU) Japan opened the Burma discussion with a call to maintain both pressure and engagement with the junta, while recognizing the limits of our influence. Japan favored continued support of UN engagement as well as direct bilateral engagement by G8 members. Canada said the skeleton ministerial statement needed to be enhanced to include material on the 2010 Burmese elections and political

prisoners. The European Council commented that both engagement and pressure consistently failed with Burma, a point seconded by many other delegations. The U.K. and Germany commented that the G8 statement should reflect the disappointing realities of the current situation. Russia called for a reference to support for ASEAN engagement with Burma and said UN engagement thus far should not be considered a failure. Italy agreed on an ASEAN reference and outreach, as well as the importance of continued support for the UN.

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Afghanistan/Pakistan  
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¶12. (C) Considerable confusion persists over what the Italians aim to accomplish with their Afghanistan-Pakistan ministerial event (Ref B), although there was consensus in support of the outcomes of our strategic review, which U/S Burns presented. Canada stressed that while the August elections are important, President Karzai's domestic opposition is also very concerned with the failure to implement laws that have been passed and the general failure of governance. Canada also highlighted its proposals for improved international coordination in Kabul and Islamabad, and stressed the need for coordinating any G8 action on Afghanistan and Pakistan with the two countries. Germany supported the Canadian proposals and said the G8 could do more on Pakistan. U/S Burns strongly supported Japan's call on its G8 partners to provide generous donations at the April 17 Pakistan donors' conference in Tokyo and highlighted the importance of greater engagement of Afghanistan's neighbors.

¶13. (C) Russia supported the Canadian proposals for greater transparency in G8 coordination between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and pressed for a reference to the narcotics problem in the ministerial statement. The U.K. said the G8 should focus more on implementing existing commitments rather than creating new mechanisms, and described the weakness of the Pakistani state as a greater long term challenge than Afghanistan. The Czech EU Presidency commented that an EU-Pakistan summit will be held by mid-June, and called for the formulation of a comprehensive strategy for Pakistan to complement the new Afghanistan one. Italy raised the subject of Afghan reconciliation with "moderate" Taliban, which provoked a variety of reactions, including comments that such a process must be Afghan-led and focused on increasing the legitimacy and support base of the Afghan government.

Iran  
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¶14. (C) The political directors' discussion of Iran focused largely on when and how to decide whether Iran is willing to respond to overtures and negotiate seriously on its nuclear program, as opposed to simply stalling for time. Leading off the discussion, Germany highlighted the confused nature of Iran's responses to USG overtures thus far, and said the EU was both considering additional designations and even stronger measures should Iran fail to engage. Germany doubted Iran would engage seriously prior to its June elections and suggested that UNGA would be the time to evaluate its behavior. Russia welcomed both the tone and substance of U.S. outreach to Iran's government and people. Russia supported the dual track approach and agreed that engagement with Iran could not be open-ended, but suggested that Iran still faced serious technological challenges in its nuclear program and that there was thus more time available to negotiate than others believed. Russia opposed any public discussion of additional sanctions as a means of pressuring Iran, for this could derail the current engagement effort. Russia acknowledged that Israel viewed the Iranian nuclear program as an existential threat and had a much more compressed view of the timeline for negotiations.

¶15. (C) The remaining delegations did not share the

(relative) Russian lack of a sense of urgency on Iran. France said it was likely that Iran would again stall for time, which required certain "gentlemen's agreements" on how long we would give Iran to respond seriously and what the international community would do if it did not. An assessment should be made during the UN General Assembly, and

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Iranian acceptance of the initial steps of a "freeze for freeze" (or lack thereof) would be important criteria. France stated that if Iran did not engage seriously, the international community should respond with very substantial (not "incremental") new sanctions. EU Political Director Cooper said Iran would have enough material for a bomb this year, and Tehran would then be faced with a decision on what to do with that material. If Iran wanted to negotiate, it could do so this year, and we should seek to put it in a position where it has no choice but to do so. This included the unified international community making Iran aware that very strong sanctions would be forthcoming should it fail to negotiate. The U.K. agreed with the EU and French points, said Iran was progressing on all three fronts (enriched uranium, weaponization, and missile technology), and that if we did not act this year, the Israelis would take the issue out of our hands. Japan agreed on the importance of the dual track policy and that the overture to Iran could not be open ended. Italy echoed these points and called for a strong G8 statement on Iran at the summit, which would come after the Iranian presidential election in June (although possibly not after the second round, should there be a runoff).

#### Middle East, Africa, and Other Business

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¶16. (SBU) On the Middle East peace process, the political directors discussed the importance of mentioning both tracks (Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Syrian), settlements, and support for the Palestinian Authority security forces in the Chairman's Statement. Canada and the U.K. (with U.S. support) urged a strong statement on the humanitarian impact of the NGO expulsion in Sudan, emphasizing the importance of delinking the International Criminal Court and NGO issues. Japan urged support for the Qatar peace process, and Russia suggested the statement also address the importance of rebel groups refraining from any actions that might undermine peace. Consensus on Zimbabwe was that signs were encouraging, but political directors should wait and see what transpires closer to the Ministerial. Italy raised the issue of West Africa, noting the growing number of fragile states, drug trafficking, Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, and clandestine immigration. Like with Yemen and piracy in the Horn, Italy proposed a systematic look at West Africa in support of UN, ECOWAS, and other initiatives, and reiterated its desire to put a marker in the Ministerial statement.

¶17. (SBU) At the end of the meeting, Canada revisited the issue of a Chairman's statement on kidnapping and ransom, but Italy suggested the issue would be too contentious, especially if the goal of the statement was to "dictate behavior"- i.e. condemn ransoms. Canada urged the G8 to put a marker down on the basic principle of combating this global epidemic, and indicated it would circulate proposed language to see if it is possible to come to agreement.

DIBBLE